

Franciscan
mission
Associates



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FR. ROBERT, O.F.M.

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POSTAL REGULATORY
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

January 28, 2020

Postal Regulatory Commission
901 New York Avenue NW Suite 200
Washington, DC 20268

RE: Docket No. RM 2017-3

Dear Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of Franciscan Mission Associates regarding our serious concerns with the USPS notice to the nonprofit mailing community and urge you to reconsider your proposal to increase postage rates several times the rate of inflation. Increases that are estimated to reach 7 percent a year, or 40 percent compounded for five years, will not reform the United States Postal Service and will have a major negative impact on both the agency and its customers.

As an organization, we count on the Postal Service to help us communicate with our donors and receive support for our mission of providing food, shelter, education, care of the elderly in serving the less fortunate people where we serve here in the State, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador and other parts of the world.

As a nonprofit, we rely on mail for the majority of our fundraising. But we operate on a limited, fixed fundraising budget each year. If postage goes up as much as you contemplate, we will be forced to greatly reduce our mailings. This will have a disastrous impact on our revenue and our mission and will in the long run affect our employees.

Direct Mail is literally the fiscal lifeblood of this organization, and has been for over 50 years. We mail over 7,000,000 pieces of mail annually. You will understand how even a cent or two at this volume makes a huge difference in the services we are able to offer people living in desperate need.

We were forced to decrease our donor acquisition mailings in the past, which had a domino effect over the years in decreasing our donor base. Also, the downturn in economic conditions means that as our expenses continue to rise, the support our donors are able to provide remains the same. Our hope is to be able to mail to more individuals, acquire more donors, gain their support, and sustain the relationship with them over time.

We are doing everything we possibly can to keep costs at a minimum, but postage increases totaling 40 percent over the next five years will impact on our mission and the people we serve in the various ministries. We need your help and the help of the Postal Regulatory Commission. We simply cannot afford postage increases over the Consumer Price Index. I hope and pray we can count on you to understand and act on the importance of the CPI inflation cap on postage increases and reconsider your proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Madeline Bonnici
Executive Director

www.franciscanmissionassoc.org

*Please consider including Franciscan Mission Associates in your will or trust.
Franciscan Friars with Missions in Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador*